

Hart District Council fact sheet: Flies and maggots in household waste bins



Overview:

Adult female flies lay their eggs on anything that can be food for maggots when they emerge. Each female fly can lay up to 500 eggs in three to four days. During warm weather these eggs can hatch into maggots in just eight to 20 hours. A fly's whole life cycle from egg to adult can be completed in as little as seven days.

Prevention is the best cure, so here are some tips to avoid attracting flies to your bin.

Flies are attracted by smell, so:

- Double wrap food waste such as meat and bones, unwanted pet food and disposable nappies, make sure the wrapping doesn't have any holes in it and secure it well so the air can't get in and liquid and smells can't get out.
- Rinse polystyrene food trays, yoghurt pots and other food packaging that cannot be recycled to reduce the smell of your refuse – you may wish to use containers with well-fitting lids to seal up food scraps before putting them into your bin.
- Check your bin for residue after it has been emptied. Rinse it out regularly to keep it clean and use disinfectant if you wish to.
- If possible store the bin away from direct sunlight.
- Keep the bin lid shut.
- Hang an insecticidal strip inside your bin, or you may wish to use a fly spray or crawling insect powder, but always take care to follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Home compost your kitchen vegetable waste in a home compost bin, visit www.getcomposting.com
- Consider purchasing a food digester, these allow you to compost meat and bones as well as vegetable matter.

In the kitchen:

- Wrap your food waste and rinse food containers as soon as you can. Empty your kitchen bin frequently and seal bags or wrappers carefully.
- Sort and separate your refuse from your recycling as you go, so that you can put waste into your black bin quickly. You may find it more convenient to have two small kitchen bins, one for recycling and one for your refuse.